

**Town of Westford  
Parks & Recreation Commission Minutes  
January 9, 2006  
Cameron Senior Center  
Pleasant Street  
7:00 P.M.**

The following are the minutes of the January 9, 2006, Town of Westford Parks & Recreation Commission meeting. A permanent set of these minutes (maintained for a period of six years) is retained in the Town Clerk's office. A set of these minutes and a tape recording are retained in the Parks & Recreation Department.

**Commissioners Present:** Colleen Barisano, Kacy Caviston, Wayne D'Agostino, John Johnson, Carolyn Metcalf, Steve Spinney, Mary Ellen Tynan

**Staff Present:** Patricia Savage, Director, Sandra Habe, Asst. Director

**Visitors:** Jim Monoxelos, WYBSA, Bob Walter, WYSA

### **I. Approval of Agenda**

Kacy motioned to approve the agenda. Mary Ellen seconded it. Motion passed unanimously.

### **II. Approval of Meeting Minutes – December 5, 2005**

The December 5, 2005 minutes were tabled for approval until February 6. Mary Ellen will edit the section including Elaine Major's discussion and send it to Sandra.

### **III. Sports Organizations – Primary**

In the past, Pat met almost monthly with the members of all of the sports organization groups. Pat feels that it is a testament to how much communication has improved that the organizations have not had to meet frequently over the past year. Pat has met individually with the sports organizations. Pat will set up a general meeting for all leaders of the sports organizations. The Westford Youth Baseball Softball Association (WYBSA) and Westford Youth Soccer Association are considered the primary user organizations. Lacrosse is considered secondary because they are not primary users of parks and recreation fields. Tim Whitcomb from football had a board meeting and was unable to attend.

Jim Monoxelos asked if there will be any other fields becoming available this year. The Parks & Recreation Department is working with Bob Conley. Veterans Memorial fields will be available through the School Department. The infields need work, but because chemicals are not to be used on the fields at Veteran's Memorial, the work must be done by hand. The WYBSA are no longer using the Blanchard field because it is in terrible condition; the sprinklers were never fixed and WYBSA found it was spending a lot of money and not getting any results.

Bob Walter said the fields at Blanchard are in terrible condition, but they are willing to work on the fields if they can come to an agreement with the School Department for preferential use of the fields. The Middlesex County Soccer Association is changing their team size to 8 vs. 8 for the twelve and under year olds age groups. This will change the size of the fields needed by WYSA. The 8 vs. 8 mandated by the Middlesex County Soccer Association has been deferred until fall 2006. Pat will have to meet with the WYSA for the 8 vs. 8 field set up for the fall.

Pat explained that we have the Nutting Road location to develop fields. The area has been flagged and surveyed. The Parks & Recreation Department will have the data on the area soon. Once we have the data and see where the wetlands are located we will be able to determine how much room we have for fields.

The Commission and Bob Conley, Athletic Director is interested in building in-filled surfacing at both the Nutting Road area and the Westford Academy fields. This would allow for resting of the natural turf fields. We are working with Bob Conley to look at all of the fields in town, not just school fields or recreation fields, but how to better maintain all of the fields in town.

The School Department is still scheduling the use of their fields but Pat is able to intervene on behalf of the sports organizations to obtain field use. An example of this is the Flag Football program. They outgrew the Greystone fields, so Pat arranged use of the Veteran Memorial Complex for the program.

The Greystone field is used for Little League and flag football. Jim Monoxelos mentioned that we had discussed cutting that field in as a Kansas City field to allow for more use. This spring WYBSA is starting a Senior Babe Ruth program for all of the High School kids. 50 to 60 participants have already registered for the program. There is a great need for the 90' diamonds at the VFW, Robinson and Veterans Memorial.

The Parks and Recreation Department did major work at the American Legion ball fields. Last year a lot of work was completed on the Jack Walsh fields. Bob Walter said that the Parks and Recreation Department did a "phenomenal" job on the Jack Walsh fields. People have commented from other towns that they would love to have fields like ours in their towns. At Jack Walsh we did not rotate the fields because the current belief in the field maintenance industry is that it is better to repair the goal mouths then systematically beat up different areas of the field. Old Nab is also in great shape. Frost is not in good shape – it is flooded in the spring.

It would be great if Crisafulli could be fixed up so the sports organizations could use that field. Football is looking to build a snack shack at the Veteran's Memorial field.

Bob Walter said that WYSA had two issues. The first is that he looks forward to working with the Parks & Recreation Department on the 8 Vs. 8 field layouts for fall of 2006 and the second is asking what the WYSA can do to support the development of the in-filled turf fields.

Pat explained that she met with Gus Bickford and Bob Conley about developing in-filled turf. Gus Bickford is spearheading a fundraising effort for the East Boston Camps and Westford Academy fields. We are looking at CPA funds to help with the development of the Nutting Road land and the reuse of the Academy as a community resource space for all people in the town. We will get the best pricing by combining the projects –the cost per field is approximately \$650,000 per field. All of the sports organizations will be invited to participate in the fundraising and development of these fields. Initial planning will start in February with the sports organizations as well as a neighborhood meeting for the abutters.

The WYBSA is now age based instead of grade based to conform to the Little League association. August 31<sup>st</sup> is now the cut off date for kids, but there is an appeal process if a child wants to play at a different level.

WYBSA wants to put roofs on the dugouts on fields 5, 6, and 7 at the American Legion Park. The reason for the roofs is for shade and protection from foul balls. An Eagle Scout from North Chelmsford built dugout roofs for their fields.

The Parks and Recreation Commission are looking at a coaches policy to have a town-wide coaches rules or code of conduct. The Commission could deal with issues that come up within the leagues, such as coaching grievances so the sports organizations would not have to deal with them. A draft agreement will be created and distributed to the sports organizations for their input. It is necessary to have coordination between the various sports league, so that a coach banned from baseball would also be banned from other sports in Westford.

Keeping the kids safe is the primary concern. Educating the coaches regarding safety procedures is essential, which includes mouth pieces, full cage helmets etc. The group agreed that education is the key.

Pat will get in touch with the sports organization about a meeting.

#### **IV. Projects/Tasks**

##### **A. East Boston Camps –**

- i. EBC Master Plan Committee - Mary Ellen explained that there has been no word on the RFP because it closes on January 23 and Norman did not attend the last meeting. EBC has been surveyed and the deeds researched. Two titles still need to be located; one includes one of the camp areas the other is along Stony Brook. They are going back to the original title company to get the deeds to the two missing pieces resolved. The good news is that the deeds clearly show two points of access off of Depot Road. The next meeting will be held on January 24.
- ii. Neighborhood Meeting – no change
- iii. Wetlands flagging – Kacy said there should be a plan by the end of next week.
- iv. Field Development Plan – Once we have the plan that shows the available area for development we can create field cutouts to design the fields on the current map of the property. We are looking for rectangular spaces, no one sport will be identified for use. We might have to phase the fields in depending on the amount of available funds.  
We don't need to go through the full approval process because we are a town department. Members of the Conservation Commission have been in support of having in-filled turf at this site.  
Steve asked if there will be lights at this location. There are currently no plans for lights.  
We would go after CPA funds in the fall.
- v. Soil testing – Testing would need to be done for drainage purposes only; if in-filled turf is installed.
- vi. Westford Academy Boosters/fundraising – no new information

**B. Old Highway Garage** – Tom Mahana (Permanent Town Building Committee) and Wayne have talked about the tour that is being organized for members of the committee as well as other interested parties to tour all of the potential buildings in town including the Parks & Recreation Department.

**C. VMC (Veterans Memorial Complex)** – Flyers are completed for fundraising. Lois will write an article about the tennis courts and the fundraising efforts. Carolyn will get in touch with Lois about writing this article.

**D. Wing/Lavallee Venture** – No new information. It was suggested that we remove “Wing” because he is not involved in this project any longer. Carolyn and Wayne will work on the Lavallee project.

**E. Rink Meeting** – They have been having meetings about developing a rink in town. Bob Henning, Carolyn Metcalf, Bill Richards, Jeff Hall (State Senator), Jim Sullivan, Tom Mahanna, Dave Guthrie, Tom Ellis, Jim Ellis, Al Duffet, Bob Moran and Gary Lavallee were all present at the meeting. The meeting was held at the Westford Grill. They discussed redesigning the fields at Veteran’s Memorial and the Lavallee property to include an ice rink and swimming pool. The next meeting is January 18, where they would like to invite some members of the Selectman to attend. They are talking about other pieces of property that might be better than the Lavallee piece, such as the land across from Drew Farm.

The commission needs to know if it is feasible to do this project. Do we want to approach the town to transfer the ownership of the Lavallee property to the Parks & Recreation Department. The Commission is interested in seeking a transfer of the Lavallee property to the Parks and Recreation Department. We will need plans before we go to the town so the residents will have a clear picture of what the Parks and Recreation Commission is planning. The town’s people would need to vote on the transfer at town meeting.

We need to review the master plan and update the needs of parks and recreation in the town.

**F. American Legion – Westford Community Playground** – No new information.

**G. Marketing** – No new information.

**H. Tech Park West** – No new information.

**I. Adams Property** – no new information

**J. Pond Street Property** – no new information

**K. Rules and Regulations Policies and Signs** – No new information.

**L. Credit Card Payment and online registration.** Pat will have this set up by March. We can not use the same system as the town. We will have to set up a merchant account. Our web-site software as well as Sportsman is capable of doing on-line registration.

**M. Town-wide Coaches Rules/Policies** – This was discussed during the sports organization meeting.

## **V. Reports/Updates**

**A. Westford Partnership for Children** – We currently have 181 students enrolled as of last Friday, in the program. The program is going well. Sandra meets regularly with the principals.

**B. Budgets** – FY'07 The budget does not reflect the amount of money we handle. Pat asked the Commission if they want to make the revolving account - the actual financial numbers – more visible to the town's people. The Finance Committee hears about the all financial aspects of the department, but the Finance Committee actually asks for very little detail. Our operational budget does not reflect all of the money taken in by the department, because so much money is taken in and expended through the revolving account. The department is supposed to move in the direction of an enterprise fund. The department does not get any recognition for the scope of the work that we do in the town, from employees to programs, from fields to common properties.

**C. Fields/Parks:**

- a. Grounds – no new information.
- b. Structures – no new information.
- c. Fencing – no new information
- d. Parking – (American Legion parking) – no new information

**VI. Old Business**

- A. **Pesticide Policy Committee** – The Commission all received a written request to participate. Jonathan is representing the Highway Department. Pat will represent the Park & Recreation Department. Sandra will act as Pat's alternate.
- B. **WPC Software** – Pat met with Chuck Reynolds about the software. Joe has left the job, but is supposed to continue to work on our software.
- C. **Rte. 40 Modern Continental Tech parcel** – (point person) Carolyn will check on this again.
- D. **Comprehensive Town Master Plan** – no new information

**VII. New Business**

- A. Lois will write an article about safety. She will call Wayne and some of the other sports organization leaders.
- B. Pumpkin Patch – The commission would like to know who has the care, custody and control.
- C. Annual Town Report is due February 7 for the calendar year 2005.
- D. Jackie McMullen – is coming to Westford.
- E. Pat and Sandra are attending the annual state meeting on January 10..
- F. Wayne's email – "Why we do it?" – Thank you from a middle school student who appreciated Wayne organizing a hockey and pizza program on a no school day.

**VIII. Next Meeting Date**

Feb. 6, March 6, April 3, May 1, June 5, 2006

**IX. Adjournment**

Mary Ellen motioned to adjourn at 9:20 p.m. Kacy seconded the motion. Agreed unanimously.

